

Message Text

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 108955 TOSEC 110733

NODIS

FOL TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE FROM JIDDA DTD 05 MAY 1976 QUOTE

S E C R E T JIDDA 3229

NODIS

FOR DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY SISCO FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE, SA, US

SUBJECT: LEBANON SITUATION--SAUDI VIEW

REF: STATE 107447

1. PRINCE FAHD REACHED WELL TO YOUR THOUGHTS AND CONCERNS ON LEBANON AND TO YOUR REQUEST FOR SAUDI ASSESSMENT. HE AGREED PROSPECTS ARE VERY DISTURBING. HE ALSO PRODUCED A WELL-DEVELOPED LINE OF ACTION WHICH HE HAS IN MIND TO DEAL WITH SITUATION THERE. HE WAS PARTICULARLY DISTURBED ABOUT PROBLEMS SYRIANS ARE ENCOUNTERING.

2. SALIENT FEATURES OF HIS RESPONSE TO YOUR MESSAGE FOLLOW:

3. SAG HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT SYRIAN PREDICAMENT

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IN LEBANON. ASSAD WANTS TO FIND WAY OUT. THEY ARE ALREADY

"EMBARRASSES" BY RISING LEVEL OF EFFORT REQUIRED OF THEM, FAHD SAID, SAUDIS SEE DANGER TO SYRIANS GETTING IN TOO DEEP AS THAT MIGHT WELL LEAD TO INTERNAL SYRIAN DIFFICULTIES.

4. SAG INTENDS CONSULT IMMEDIATELY WITH CERTAIN ARAB GOVERNMENTS. THEY HOPE THESE TALKS WILL BE CONFIDENTIAL LONG ENOUGH TO ASCERTAIN THEIR ATTITUDES (HE MENTIONED EGYPT, SYRIA, JORDAN AND PALESTINIANS) TOWARD IDEA OF SAUDI MEDIATION. IF THEY FAVOR AND AGREE TO SUPPORT, SAG WILL THEN ISSUE CALL TO ALL LEBANESE FACTIONS TO STOP THE BLOODSHED AND WILL OFFER TO MEDIATE. HE DID NOT DETAIL FORM SUCH MEDIATION WOULD ASSUME.

5. HE REQUESTED THAT WE PROVIDE HIM NOT LATER THAN SUNDAY, MAY 9, AND AFTER THAT ON CONTINUING BASIS, WITH AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON SITUATION AS AMBASSADOR BROWN AND DEPT SEE IT. HE WOULD LIKE IT IN WRITTEN FORM, NOT IDENTIFIABLE AS AMERICAN (HE MADE IT CLEAR THAT SAG EFFORT MUST HAVE "SAG LABEL ONLY" IF IT IS TO BE CREDIBLE)

6. I INQUIRED WHETHER HE BELIEVED GENERAL MEDIATION WOULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE THAN DIRECT SAUDI EFFORT TO BRING JUMBLATT AND SYRIANS TOGETHER. HE SAID NEITHER LATTER APPROACH NOR ANY OTHER THAT APPEARED LIKELY TO LOWER TENSIONS WOULD BE RULED OUT, BUT FIRST IT ESSENTIAL TO LEARN WHETHER ALL CONCERNED WOULD SUPPORT SAUDI EFFORT. HE HOPE HE COULD OBTAIN NECESSARY ASSURANCES FROM ALL PARTIES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, HE SAID, BECAUSE WHEN SOVIETS HEAR OF SAUDI MEDIATION ROLE THEY WILL ORDER ALL THEIR FRIENDS AND AGENT TO PREVENT IT.

7. HE VOLUNTEERED THAT SAG HAS MAINTAINED CONTACTS WITH ALL ELEMENTS, INCLUDING CHRISTIANS (WHO HAVE REQUESTED SAUDI MEDIATION) AND JUMBLATT SUPPORTERS. HE EXPRESSED VIEW THAT JUMBLATT'S PRESENT TACTICS INDICATE THAT HE IS PLAYING FOR HIGH STAKES. JUMBLATT'S CURRENT ATTITUDE TOWARD PREIDENTIAL ELECTIONS MEANS HE HAS NOT YET ACHIEVED ARRANGEMENTS HE CAN DEPEND ON TO FURTHER HIS AMIBITIONS. FAHD SAID THERE ARE TWO KINDS OF PEOPLE WITH JUMBLATT: (1) MOSLEMS WHO DON'T UNDERSTAND HIM, AND (2) COMMUNISTS WHO UNDERSTANDS HIS AIRMS VERY WELL AND WHO WILL HELP HIM ACHIEVE THEM, AFTER THAT HAPPENS,

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JUMBLATT WILL BE THEIR FIRST VICTIM, FADH SAID.

8. WHILE HE WAS FORTHCOMING WITH RESPECT TO SYRIAN PROBLEMS IN LEBANON, AND IN DISCUSSION OF JUMBLATT'S OUTLOOK, I NOTED HE DISPLAYED RETICENCE WHEN IN INQUIRED, IN PASSING, ABOUT EGYPTIAN VIEW OF SITUATION.

9. IN ADDITION TO FOREGOING, FAHD PROVIDED REVIEW OF EVENTS IN

LEBANON WHICH I BELIEVE IT UNNECESSARY TO DETAIL HERE.

10. HE AKSED ME TO RETURN TO RIYADH TO SEE HIM AT ELEVEN A.M.
NEXT SUNDAY. I WOULD BE PLEASED TO HAVE WHATEVER MATERIAL
OR COMMENT YOU CAN SUPPLY BY THAT TIME.

11. SUGGEST VERY LIMITED DISTRIBUTION OF THIS MESSAGE BY
DEPT PORTER UNQTE SISCO

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